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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8368  
INFO RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 7338  
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY 6087  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 0768  
RUEHUM/AMEMBASSY ULAANBAATAR PRIORITY 1248  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 1799

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 001942

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MOSCOW FOR REFCOORD RICHARDSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/18/2015

TAGS: PREF PREL KS KN RS

SUBJECT: ROK CAUTIOUS ON REFUGEE PROCESSING IN RUSSIA

REF: STATE 93689

Classified By: A/POL Sung Y. Kim. Reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

(C) On June 12, poloff delivered reftel points, informing the ROKG that the USG will be discussing its interest in processing North Korean asylum seekers for U.S. resettlement on a case-by-case basis with the GOR, to Pak Ji-hyun, Deputy Director of MOFAT's Inter-Korean Policy Division. Pak welcomed the advance notification, but speculated that Russia would be unlikely to issue exit permission for North Koreans who were approved for U.S. refugee resettlement because it might lead to increasing numbers of North Korean asylum seekers in Russia. If approached by GOR officials, the ROKG would reiterate that it had no objections to U.S. participation in the resettlement of North Koreans who wanted to depart for a country other than South Korea. The ROKG, however, would need to wait for the GOR reaction to gauge how best to assist with possible USG processing of North Koreans in Russia, noting that Seoul's relations with Moscow were different than with Bangkok.

VERSHBOW